



NEWSLETTER

U.S. Route 20 Public Involvement Program

Vol. 1, No. 4, November 1995

Work Group Officers

Agriculture

* Chair: Ronald Mapes, Stockton
* Advisory Council Rep:
Melyn Gratton, Galena
* Sec: John Curless, Stockton

Economic Development

* Chair: Tom Warner, E. Dubuque
* Advisory Council Rep:
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* Sec: Helen Schamberger,
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Environment

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* Advisory Council Rep:
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* Advisory Council Rep:
Paul Conner, Galena
* Sec: Jeff Wingers, Elizabeth

Tourism

* Co-Chairs: Kala Freeman,
Gerald Baustman, Elizabeth
* Advisory Council Rep:
Tony Kemp, Galena

Contact an individual above if you
would like to become involved in a
Work Group for the U.S. Route 20
study or call 1-800-837-RT20.

Future Four-Lane Study Schedule Set

A Public Hearing on Impacts Targeted for 1997

A Joint Work Group meeting will be held in November to discuss the Illinois Department of Transportation's study of a four-lane expressway option along the existing Route 20 roadbed.

In early 1996 another Joint Work Group meeting will be held so that IDOT can show Work Group members a specific Snipe Hollow freeway alignment.

A full study of the new Snipe Hollow alignment will add about a year to the Route 20 four-lane highway environmental impact study, said William D. Ost, IDOT District Engineer.

A Public Information Meeting will be held in late spring 1996 for all the residents of Stephenson and Jo Daviess Counties to learn the status of all alignment studies. Work Groups as well as the

Advisory Council will meet after each Joint Work Group meeting to discuss impacts and the feasibility of each four-lane option.

Next summer the final Joint Work Group meeting is expected to be held on the final results of all environmental studies and a comparison of each of the study's feasible alignments.

After the final Joint Work Group meeting, the Council will develop recommendations for IDOT on project impacts and highway location.

A final Public Information Meeting is expected to be held in fall 1996. Advisory Council recommendations will be finalized, and a public hearing will be held in 1997.

Four-Lane Highway Study Focuses On Both Expressway and Freeway Options

The Route 20 four-lane highway study includes the following six alternatives:

- * a freeway alignment with options through (1) Longhollow, (2) Irish Hollow and (3) Snipe Hollow
- * an (4) expressway and a (5) freeway alignment along the existing Route 20 roadbed and
- * the (6) no action alternative.

(See page 2.)

U.S. Route 20: Answers to Your Questions

Question: Is IDOT studying only a freeway for northwest Illinois?

Answer: No, IDOT is studying six four-lane highway options. There are four freeway options under study, including Longhollow, Irish Hollow and Snipe Hollow and the existing Route 20 roadbed, as well as an expressway option for existing Route 20. The do nothing option is being studied also. (See pp. 1-3.)

Question: What is the difference between a freeway and an expressway?

Answer: A freeway is a four-lane fully-access controlled highway built like an interstate which allows access only at interchanges, via ramps, for entering or leaving the highway. An expressway is similar to a freeway in three regards: both are four-lane facilities, direct commercial access is prohibited and both have interchanges. (Expressways require interchanges at the junctions of heavily travelled roads and all state highways.) However, expressways differ from freeways in that they do allow some direct access via side roads, residential driveways, field entrances and frontage roads.

Question: Where can the public obtain project study information?

Answer: Current project study information has been placed in post offices at Galena, Warren, Stockton, Lena and Freeport. Materials are also placed at local libraries. Study findings are the subject of periodic Joint Work Group and Public Information Meetings in the region. Notice of meetings are sent to local news outlets. Call 1-800-837-RT20 for the latest information.

Illinois Department of Transportation

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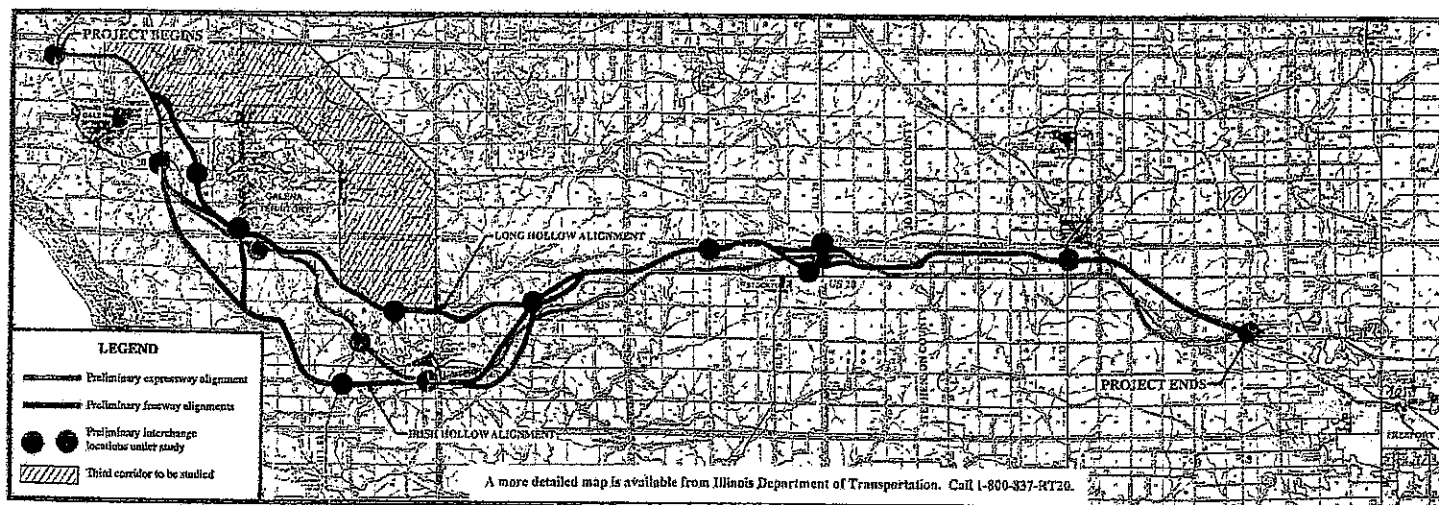
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Expressway Study Shows Where Old Route 20 Could Be Expanded



The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) is studying existing U.S. Route 20 as an expressway and as a freeway as part of its environmental impact assessment of a four-lane highway in northwest Illinois. Under either scenario, bypasses of local communities would be constructed with interchanges at various points.

"It's important that all property owners along Route 20 are aware of our study of the existing alignment, and bring their concerns regarding impacts to IDOT," said William D. Ost, District Engineer. "The Work Groups have met with property owners along the other proposed alignments under study, and have made property owner concerns known to us."

As shown on the map above, the expressway alignment would bypass Galena on the north along the same line as the most westerly freeway alignment, crossing existing Route 20 with an interchange near Horseshoe Mound.

The expressway would then follow existing U.S. 20 utilizing some of the existing right-of-way for a short distance just east of Small Fox Creek and again from Tugley Woods to IL Route 84. Interchanges would be provided near the entrance to the Galena Territory and at IL 84. The alignment then bypasses Elizabeth to the south with an interchange at Pleasant Hill Road.

The expressway would then return to and

generally follow the existing alignment with the exception of bypasses of Woodbine on the south, Stockton on the north and Elroy on the south with interchanges at IL Route 78, IL Route 73 and at the east end of the project at either Bolton Road or Business Route 20/AYP Road.

A number of direct access points are also planned for local roads to intersect with the expressway. No cloverleaf interchange designs are planned for any alternate, Ost said. "We are using diamond interchanges because a cloverleaf just takes too much land."

Generally, the expressway alignment follows the old existing alignment from Freeport to Elizabeth, Ost

said, and then requires more use of new alignment from Elizabeth to Galena due to the bypasses, inadequate design of the old road and limited land along the ridgetops to develop a four-lane highway.

The Work Groups must consider all the issues with each alignment; however, there are potential trade-offs with an expressway, Ost said. There would be negative impact with displacement of homes and farms along the existing highway. Safety is also a question. The expressway would have to serve all types of traffic including farm equipment. Uncontrolled commercial strip development paralleling the alignment is also enhanced.



NEWSLETTER

U.S. Route 20 Public Involvement Program

Vol. 1, No. 5, October 1996

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* Sec: Jeff Windsor, Elizabeth

Tourism

* Co-Chair: Kate Freeman, Galena
Gerald Bausman, Elizabeth
* Advisory Council Rep: Tony Kemp,
Galena; Alk. Betty Vely, Elizabeth
* Sec: Marianne Fitzgerald, Elizabeth

Contact an individual above if you
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study or call 1-800/837-RT20.

Elizabeth Plans For Impacts Of A Bypass

Chamber Promotes Apple River Fort To Draw Tourists

Gerald Bausman, Tourism
Work Group Co-Chair and
president of the Elizabeth Chamber
of Commerce, recently showed
Work Group members the
Chamber's plan for construction of
the historic Apple River Fort near
downtown Elizabeth. "It could

limit those impacts. A local
survey showed that businesses
along Rt. 20 fear a bypass may
cause them to lose business.

A statue of "Elizabeth," a
pioneer woman who helped
protect the children at the Fort
in the Blackhawk Wars, has

"We must offset the effects of a bypass in limiting
tourism and patronage of our local businesses."

Gerald Bausman, Tourism Work Group Co-Chair

help limit negative impacts of a
four-lane bypass on local tourism
and business," Bausman said.

The Tourism and the Economic
Development Work Groups have
studied bypass impacts. Some
studies showed that towns taking a
bypass into account in planning

been designed by a local artist.
Bausman said the Fort and
parking will be located near
downtown to draw visitors to
the shops on Main Street.

A new logo for the Fort is
displayed on banners hung
along Main Street.

IDOT Shows Preliminary Location For A New Freeway In The Snipe Hollow Area

After a year of study, IDOT
working with their consultant,
Louis Berger & Assoc. Inc. of IL,
and with local officials has
developed an initial freeway
location in the Snipe Hollow area
for public review.

"We have been looking at a
wide study corridor. Now we want
everyone's input on where the
highway could be placed within
that corridor or where the corridor
needs to be modified to address

more specific concerns. We
are viewing the alignment not
as a fixed line, but again as a
rubber band like the other
preliminary alignment
locations," said William D.
Ost, IDOT District Engineer.

"This alignment is being
studied at the request of the
Environment Work Group,"
Ost added.

As now drawn, the current
alignment proposal would
(continued on page 2)

U.S. Route 20: Answers to Your Questions

Question: What does the U.S. Route 20 project schedule look like now?

Answer: Two Joint Work Group meetings are slated to be held this fall/winter. One will address the Snipe Hollow alignment. The other will allow the public to ask questions of federal and state agency officials about their roles in the study. In 1997 a Joint Work Group/Public Information Meeting will be held comparing all alignments and providing data on environmental studies. Work Groups and the Advisory Council will then prepare their conclusions for IDOT. A public hearing will follow, and IDOT's recommendation will subsequently go to the Federal Highway Administration for its decision on a four-lane alignment for the region.

Question: How can the public obtain project study information?

Answer: General project study information is periodically placed in post offices at Galena, Warren, Stockton, Lena and Freeport and in local libraries. Study findings are also the subject of periodic Public Information Meetings in the region. Notices of those and other related public meetings are sent to local news outlets. Call 1-800/837-RT20 with questions.

Snipe Hollow Alignment... (continued from page 2)

may prove significant, he added, is that the Longhollow and Snipe Hollow alignments require a mile-long northerly extension of IL Route 84 near Elizabeth. How this will influence future recommendations is a part of the upcoming comparison.

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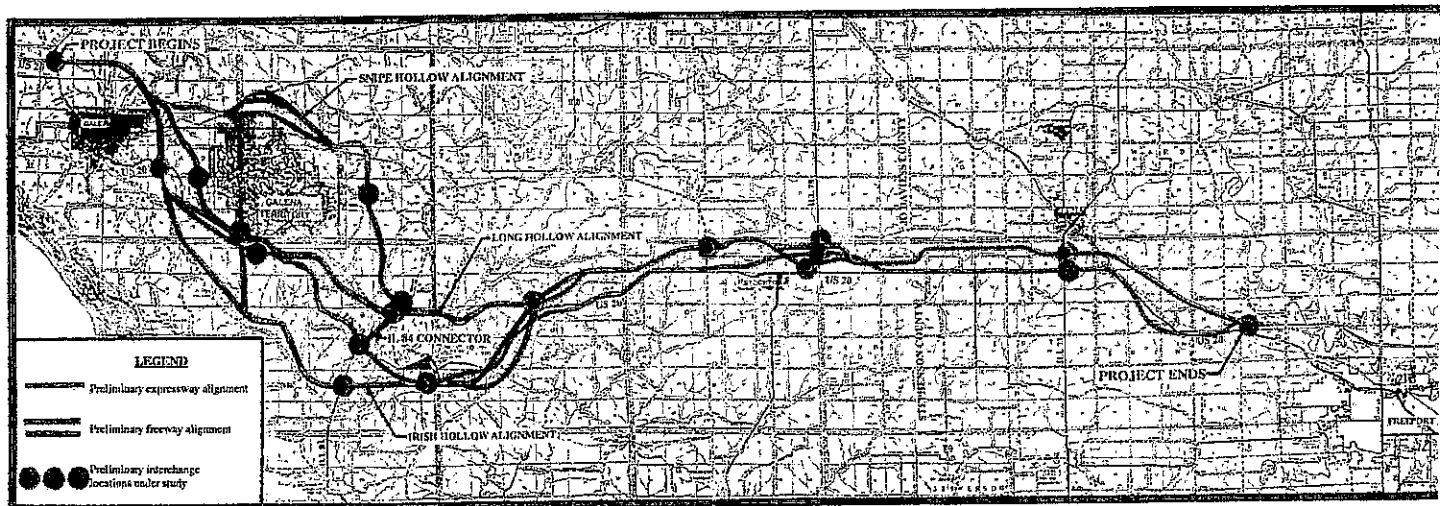
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Snipe Hollow Study Shows Where A Freeway Could Be Located



bypass Galena on the northeast side crossing the Galena River and proceed easterly across mostly dissected upland terrain rather than along open hollows like the Irish Hollow and Longhollow alignments. Near Scales Mound Road the alignment turns 90 degrees in a southerly direction until it ties into the Longhollow alignment north of Elizabeth.

The undulating terrain poses some difficult engineering problems such as steep crossroad grades at interchange locations. An interchange is being considered at Mordley Road between Clark Lane and Scales Mound Road. Some Galena Territory property owners say they would prefer

the entrance into the Territory to remain at its current Route 20 location. This would preserve security logistics for the Territory as well as current access to the local road system.

There are important archaeological sites to avoid as well as many historic stone buildings in the Snipe Hollow corridor. Threatened and endangered species also have been considered in determining the preliminary alignment location.

Ryan Hippen of IDOT says now that all of the major alignments have been identified, comparisons of costs and impacts will become a major focus. One of the factors that has not been emphasized but
(continued on page 4)

Advisory Council Develops Method Comparing Route 20 Alignments

The Route 20 Advisory Council in recent working sessions has been analyzing different methodologies for Work Groups and the Council to use in comparing the impacts of each alignment.

"There are some very difficult choices and comparisons to be made in formulating our conclusions for IDOT," said Jim Gitz, Council spokesperson. "We want to be sure that all impacts are included in our methodology, and that the relative importance of each concern is reflected for each alignment being studied." Gitz said that the Work Groups will identify impact criteria in their areas of expertise and assign relative

weights to each criterion. This allows each alignment to be compared to all other alignments systematically.

Work Groups are now determining the primary criteria for agriculture, economic development, environment, government and tourism. A report will be made by each Work Group to the Advisory Council which will develop conclusions on regional impacts. "The Work Groups and Advisory Council have become a broad-based voice for the public in northwest Illinois," Gitz said, "because of their wide representation of the region."



NEWSLETTER

U.S. Route 20 Public Involvement Program
Vol. 1, No. 6, April 1998

Work Group Officers

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* Sec: John Curious, Stockton

Economic Development

* Chair: Tom Warner, E. Dubuque
* Advisory Council Rep:
Helen Schenberger, Stockton
* Sec: Randy Lansing, Elizabeth

Environment

* Chair: Jim Gitz, Freeport
* Advisory Council Rep:
James Rachuy, Stockton
* Sec: Sophie Fletcher, Galeana

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study or call 1-800/837-RT20.

State Presents U.S. Route 20 Purpose & Need Advisory Council Members Review Statement

The U.S. Route 20 Advisory Council members representing Work Groups on Agriculture, Economic Development, Environment, Government and Tourism met recently to hear of IDOT's analysis of the purpose and need for a new four-lane highway

local residents attended. "This is the first chapter of the Environmental Impact Statement," said William D. Ost, District Engineer, "which is being written as the engineering design study is developed." Most design

From U.S. Route 20 Purpose & Need Statement:
The proposed improvement should integrate the needs of increased development, system capacity, travel safety, community access and system continuity. (See page 2)

in Stephenson and Jo Daviess Counties. Advisory Council members as well as the public asked questions regarding the Statement which were answered by IDOT officials. Some 130

details are in place between Freeport and Stockton and around Galeana, Ost added. For a copy of the Statement or to comment, please call 1-800/837-RT20.

Work Groups Report on Impact Criteria Members Will Meet To Refine Criteria And Measures

Work Group Chairs reported at the recent Advisory Council meeting on members' progress in developing criteria for assessing the impacts of each of the proposed four-lane U.S. Route 20 highway alignments on the region. (Full lists of the criteria for each Work Group are on pages three and four inside.)

Criteria were established by mailing questionnaires to each Work Group member. Now, Work

Groups will meet to determine how each criterion should be measured. For example, how will protecting endangered species be measured? They also will discuss IDOT's Purpose & Need Statement. Meeting announcements will be mailed once meeting dates have been set.

Later this year IDOT plans to present a comparison of impacts for each alignment.

U.S. Rt. 20: Answers to Your Questions

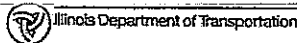
- Question:** If Route 20 will be a freeway on each end of this project, why study anything else but a freeway?
Answer: The impacts and cost of a freeway may be too great to build initially, so we must evaluate all four-lane options, both expressway and freeway. From a safety standpoint, it is not desirable to change back and forth from one type of highway to another; but we must consider many things in the study.
- Question:** If all of IDOT's planned repairs and upgrades are completed on existing Route 20 over the next five to ten years, why would we still need a new, separate four-lane highway?
Answer: Adding shoulders, truck passing lanes and making repairs still do not address the substandard grades and areas with poor sight distance. This would require replacement of some 70 percent of the existing roadway. In addition, traffic volumes will continue to increase beyond the capacity of two lanes.
- Question:** Will the old two-lane highway be safe?
Answer: It will be much safer than it is now because a great deal of the traffic volume will have been diverted to the new four-lane, and much of the incompatible mix of vehicle types will be gone.
- Question:** If IDOT builds a new four-lane highway, who will maintain old Route 20?
Answer: It depends on the wishes of local government. Old Route 20 would not be as high a maintenance priority for IDOT as before. IDOT would see if a local agency could provide maintenance services (snow removal, pavement patching, minor repairs, etc.), but would not force a local entity to take over.
- Question:** Does IDOT have to replace the wetlands it impacts?
Answer: Yes. If IDOT replaces the acreage close to where it was disturbed, the replacement must be at a 1.5:1 ratio. If the replacement is several miles away from the original site, the ratio increases. Thus, IDOT must always replace more wetland acreage than is disturbed.

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U.S. Route 20 Purpose & Need Detailed For Stephenson and Jo Daviess Counties

The five areas of need identified in IDOT's Purpose & Need Statement are based upon specific, region-wide needs for a new four-lane highway between Chenoa and Freeport.

Regional Economic Needs are reflected by the new developments at Apple River Canyon, Lena, Galeana Territory, Longhollow Point and the industrial areas west of Galeana and in East Dubuque.

System Capacity Needs are brought about by the 5.5 percent actual traffic growth exhibited within the project limits from 1983 to 1993, and a conservative projected growth rate of 3.36 percent through 2020. The Level of Service (LOS) for Route 20 should be at least LOS B, but is now at C and is projected to be at Level E by 2020 for the majority of the highway, with Level F (gridlock) around Galeana and the Galeana Territory.

Safety Needs are illustrated by the fact that 70 percent of Route 20 doesn't meet current design standards, having inadequate shoulders, curves, grades and sight distances. There is just a 34% chance to safely pass other vehicles eastbound between Galeana and Freeport and 37% westbound. Because of these and other factors, the accident rate is higher than the state average for this type of highway.

Community Access Needs are based on travel needs to and from and between communities for emergency services, business, leisure and school attendance, for example. Thus, a new highway needs to be close to existing communities along Route 20. From 1980 to 1990, there has been an increase in nonfarm jobs, the number of houses and the number of wage earners per household in area communities.

System Continuity Needs are those associated with meeting a long distance motorist's expectations by providing a highway facility that is consistent in the design of its major roadway elements. For example, a highway meeting these needs would not go back and forth between two lanes and four lanes and would desirably maintain the same type of access control. Route 20 from Galeana to Freeport is the last two-lane section of highway between Rockford and Waterloo, Iowa, other than the Julien Dubuque Bridge.

A conversion of the existing expressway to a freeway between East Dubuque and Galeana is now under study, and IDOT anticipates the expressway between Freeport and Rockford will ultimately be upgraded to a freeway. Thus, there is a need to consider both an expressway and a freeway for this last highway link for the region.

For a complete copy of IDOT's Route 20 Purpose & Need Statement, call 1-800/837-RT20.

Route 20 Work

U.S. Route 20 Work Groups have each developed a list of preliminary highway alternate evaluation criteria in priority order (see page 2) to be used to evaluate how each alternate impacts their areas of interest. The total of each Work Group's numerical allocation is equal to 100 percent. Some marginal criteria may be eliminated by Work Groups in finalizing their lists. Each Work Group will be meeting to refine and determine how to measure each criterion, and then will apply the criteria to each of the alternate alignments, using the data they and IDOT have obtained. They will present their findings to the Advisory Council, which will integrate the evaluations to determine how each alternate impacts the entire region. See Work Group Highway Alternate Evaluation Criteria below.

Agriculture Work Group

- * Minimize farm-splitting which results in irregularly shaped and landlocked parcels 18.8%
- * Minimize disruption of local road networks and access to fields, markets and suppliers 14.7%
- * Limit loss of prime and important farmland acreage 13.3%
- * Avoid displacement of farm homes and other working structures 10.7%
- * Limit the mixing of farm traffic with commercial and tourist traffic 10.3%
- * Avoid creation of uneconomical farming operations 9.4%
- * Not adversely affect drainage patterns and tile fields (soil conservation/erosion control) 7.9%
- * Not disrupt livestock and dairy operations 5.4%
- * Avoid Contentional Farms 4.5%
- * Minimize potential related development pressures on agricultural land uses 4.5%
- * Minimize disruption of utilities and wells 0.9%

Economic Development Work Group

- * Provide for the safest route possible for business-related transportation 28.9%
- * Retain the greatest number of businesses and jobs 24.4%
- * Maximize the creation of new businesses and jobs 24.4%
- * Separate the local business traffic from the through traffic as much as possible 22.3%

Groups Set Impact Criteria

Environment Work Group

- * Preserving Natural Areas especially large continuous tracts (woodlands, wetlands, prairies and natural hollows, rivers, lakes, streams and natural springs and natural drainage ways; geological features such as sink holes, rock outcroppings, mines, mounds; nature preserves, conservation areas) 31.5%
- * Avoid, Measure and Minimize Pollution (surface and underground water quality; silt and contamination; water runoff, air/noise, visual, noise pollution; night light pollution) 24.0%
- * Protecting Endangered and Threatened Species and their essential habitats 19.5%
- * Preserving Scenic Areas, Views and Natural Contours (views - open space and unusual terrain for residents and tourism) 13.0%
- * Preserving the Uniqueness of the Region (driftless area - no glacial activity) 12.0%

Government Work Group

- * Access to communities, including the number and location of proposed interchanges 20.7%
- * Impacts on emergency services (EMT, fire, police and school bus routes) 18.7%
- * Impacts on local government economics (tax revenues, property value changes) 14.8%
- * Impacts on existing infrastructure (e.g., local roads and streets) 14.4%
- * Ownership and maintenance of (a) existing Route 20 and (b) overpasses (state vs. local) 13.9%
- * Compatibility with current land use and future land use plans 13.4%
- * Impacts on municipal services 4.1%

Anyone wanting to comment on individual Work Group criteria should contact the Work Group Chair or other Work Group officer as listed on the front page of this newsletter.

Tourism Work Group

- * Provide easy access to and preservation of present local businesses, especially those on HWY 20 22.0%
- * Preserve tranquility, scenic views and unique terrain 20.3%
- * Encourage recreational tourism in entire area: biking, hiking, skiing, golfing, antique and specialty shopping 18.6%
- * Service transportation needs of tourists and local population 15.3%
- * Preserve historical character and unique local charm 11.9%
- * Preserve wildlife for recreational tourism: bird watching, hunting and fishing 11.9%

Public Involvement Recap:

Types of U.S. Route 20 Meetings

There is tremendous detail in the Route 20 four-lane impact study process. To assure the public is involved, a variety of meetings are held. **Work Group Meetings** - Local residents concerned with impacts on a specific interest area conduct their own meetings to discuss impacts as study findings become available. Work Groups typically meet after IDOT has released new information at a Joint Work Group meeting. **Joint Work Group Meetings** - All Work Groups meet together to obtain new project information so that all can be informed at the same time and can ask questions, obtain answers from IDOT and hear each other's concerns. **Advisory Council Meetings** - The Chair and one other representative of each Work Group sit on the Advisory Council which meets formally to discuss IDOT and Work Group activities. The Council will integrate input from each of the Work Groups and present its findings to IDOT near the end of the study. **Advisory Council Working Sessions** - Advisory Council members meet informally to discuss procedural matters which affect Work Groups or the Council. No business is conducted. **Public Information Meetings** - Countywide, open-house meetings for the general public (who may not be on a Work Group) to be updated and to comment. All meetings are open to the public and except for Council working sessions are advertised in the media and have opportunity for public comment.